

Submitter: Margaret Young
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2554

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House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for HB 2554 – Social Work Licensure Compact

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair's Javadi and Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Margaret Joy Young, and I am a licensed social worker in Oregon. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2554, which would allow Oregon to join the Social Work Licensure Compact.

I have been a licensed Social Worker for over a decade and a practicing social worker for over twenty-five years. I have practiced during some of the most challenging times in history: during the 911 crisis, the global pandemic, Wall Street incident, killing of George Floyd/protests, the assault on our nation's capital, and the current challenges facing our nation. I listen every day to people who are in extreme emotional distress, fear, and turmoil. I value every minute of the work that I do. As Social Workers, our ability to serve people easily is so important. I provide my services both in person and virtually and have offered my services to our neighbors in Vancouver Washington due to dual licensure and the demand for my services as one of the few African American licensed clinicians in the Pacific North West. Since the pandemic, many people who would not have accessed psychotherapy services have done so due to the ease of the virtual platform.

Like many of my colleagues, I have witnessed firsthand the growing demand for social work services in our state. Burnout is at an all-time high, and we simply do not have enough social workers to meet the needs of all Oregonians. By joining the compact, we can help address this crisis by making it easier for qualified professionals to work in Oregon, reducing barriers to licensure, and expanding the

social work workforce.

This bill would also provide much-needed relief for existing social workers by increasing our professional mobility. Many of us have family in other states or want the flexibility to work across state lines through telehealth. HB 2554 would streamline this process and ensure that Oregon remains a competitive and attractive place for social workers.

I strongly urge you to support this legislation so that Oregon can take a crucial step toward addressing our social work shortage and improving access to care. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Margaret Joy Young, LCSW

Portland Oregon